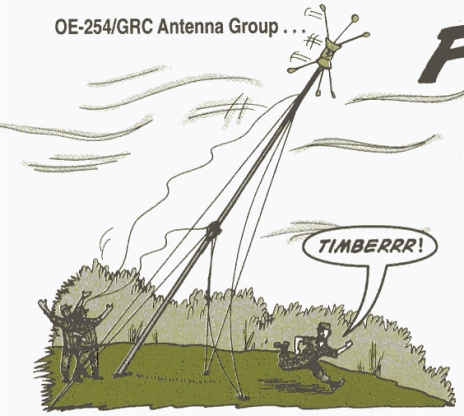
OE-254/GRC Antenna Group . . .

Facing the Feedcone Facts



It's a tough life for OE-254 antenna feedcones. Here are five common hazards and what you can do about them:

Hazard 1. Operators drop the antennas while lowering or raising them. That cracks the plastic section of the feedcone and the feedcone comes apart.

Stop dropped antennas. Para 2-9 of TM 11-5985-357-13 tells you how to safely raise and lower the mast.

One of the most important—and often neglected—points the TM makes is using a support to keep radial elements off the ground when lowering the antenna and to give a lowered antenna a resting place.

Hazard 2. High winds pry the glued-on cones away from the housing.

Reinforce the feedcones with nylon cord, NSN 4020-00-262-2019. Here's how:

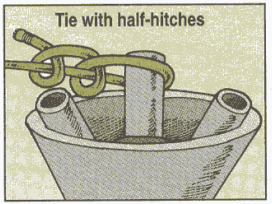
Cut about three feet of cord. Tie one end to an upper cone antenna feed using two half-hitches. Cinch the knot tight.

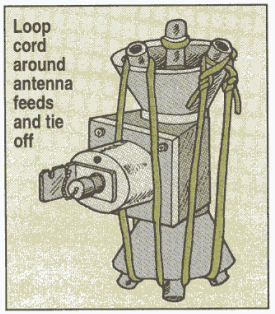
Loop the cord around an antenna feed on the lower cone. Then loop it around a feed on the upper cone.

Weave the cord up, down and around until you get back to where you started.

Pull it tight and tie it with two more half-hitches.

Trim any extra cord and melt the ends to prevent fraying.





Hazard 3. Items are thrown onto the bag where the feedcone is stored.

The feedcone may look tough, but it's too fragile to be tossed about or have things tossed on it.

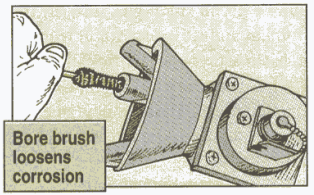
Make the feedcones one of the last things you store. Stencil the storage bag to warn folks not to toss things on top of it.

Hazard 4. Corrosion and rust build up in the feedcone sockets.

Keep the feedcone sockets clean and corrosion-free with a small arms bore brush, NSN 1005-00-903-1296. Use handle, NSN 1005-01-113-0321, for a better grip and more twisting force.

Just twist the bore brush down into the socket and turn it several times.

The stiff fibers loosen corrosion and clean out the grooves.



Then wipe out the socket with isopropyl alcohol, NSN 6810-00-753-4993, and foam swabs, NSN 7045-01-154-1317.

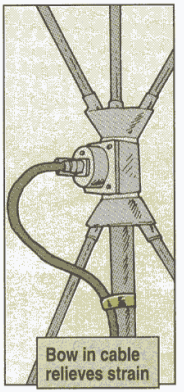
There is some good news. The SMR code on the transformer, Item 1 on Page 4-1 in TM 11-5985-357-23P, will be changed from PAFZZ to PAOZZ. Being able to change out the transformers at unit level will save a lot of time and money.

Hazard 5. The sheer weight of the CG-1889 RF cable puts a strain on both the feedcone connector and the RF cable.

Eventually, the feedcone connector pin bends or breaks. Or the cable wiring breaks at the cable connector. Either one can lead to high reflected RF power that can damage your radio.

Follow these tips to take the strain off of the connection:

- Attach a PF-211 strain relief clamp, NSN 5975-00-563-0229, to the RF cable and the upper guy plate of the mast. Para 2-4 of TM 11-5895-357-13 shows you how.



- Put a small bow in the cable just below the feedcone. Tape the cable to the uppermost section of the mast. You'll find electrical tape, NSN 5970-00-419-4291, in Appendix E of the TM.
- For more strain relief, continue to tape the cable to the mast every five feet or so.

Tape cable every five feet